



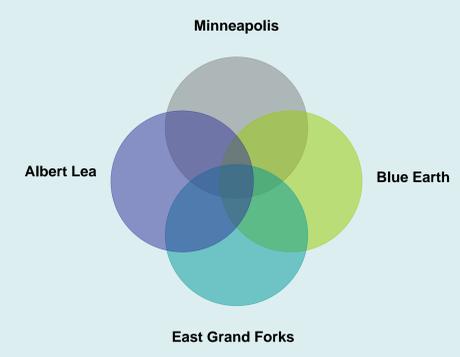
# THE VISIT

**ASHTON SCHNEIDER**  
 FACULTY ADVISER: LUYERNE SEIFERT  
 UNIVERSITY RESEARCH OPPORTUNITY PROGRAM

## BACKGROUND

I assisted in the conducting of surveys to our audience. I engaged in talkbacks with them after shows to further absorb how the show has impacted them. We toured to the three small towns of Albert Lea, East Grand Forks and Blue Earth, Minnesota.

Through personal conversations and written surveys as well as informal talkbacks we asked the necessary and important questions to gage how this specific production of *The Visit* has changed their perception and engagement in theater arts



## OBJECTIVE

To assess and gage the intrigue and challenges proposed by this type of theatrical experiment in small town Minnesota.

## CONCLUSION

The Visit provided small town audiences with an experience many had never encountered before. It challenged their views of theater arts and performance. This production also asked out audiences to engage in critical thoughts focused on money and society. It is vital that there are quality art opportunities in small towns.

## Cast Photos of the Summer 2013 Production Albert Lea, Blue Earth, East Grand Forks



## AUDIENCE SURVEYS

### Question #1

**Has this production changed the way you think about theater?**

- Yes: 123
- No: 31
- Somewhat/Kind of: 33

*Important/interesting responses:*

- “Proved it [theatre] can be accomplished well anywhere.”
- “This was extremely innovative and fun!”
- “Sense of community and audience is alive and beautiful here [in the village]”
- “This production made theater feel much more immediate and relevant. This was an amazing experience, especially in the church setting.”
- “I’ve been involved in many theater productions and this gave me a fresh new outlook. I’ve never been to or seen anything like it and I’m very glad I attended.”
- “I liked interacting and moving around outside of a “theatre” space.”
- “It was a very personal approach and I felt a lot of emotion”
- “Great use of the museum buildings.”
- “I would like to see more of it done in settings like this.”
- “Loved engaging audience – we were complicit.”
- “I didn’t realize how enjoyable theater productions could be!”
- “Less static, makes audience feel more vulnerable - don’t know what to expect.”
- “Yes first time participating in outdoor ‘moving’ production.”
- “I kept wondering if the audience members would render the verdict and how I would ultimately vote.”

### Question #2

**After attending *The Visit*, will you consider attending another theater event in the future?**

- Yes: 185
- No: 1
- NA/ Maybe: 1

### Question #3

**Has this play inspired you to think about personal or political issues (personal vs public responsibility) related to you?**

- Yes:150
- No: 20
- Somewhat: 17

*Important/ interesting responses:*

- “Our country relying on immediate gratification.”
- “How fitting to see it in Albert Lea, which has been screwed over by land speculators, meat packing companies, etc. throughout its history.”
- “It has reinforced my dedication to working for good.”
- “Especially how complicit I am in the earn/spend/consume materialism encouraged in our society. And my acceptance of a system that perpetuates gross inequalities.”
- “This provoked an emotional response. What is the difference between sacrifice and necessary compromise? How are we all complicit in the injustice around us?”
- “Albert Lea is similar to Guellen. South of town in ghost town like. Buy Locally!”
- “Yes and our friends are going out now to discuss it..”
- “Yes and that’s why I came back to see it again - a lively fight ensued.”
- “Always, I read the play about 20 years ago and feel entirely different about it”
- “Nothing man does surprises me. I could see this happening (not here though)

### Question #4

**Has this play inspired you to think about personal or political issues (personal vs public responsibility) related to you?**

- Yes:150
- No: 20
- Somewhat: 17

*Important/interesting responses:*

- “I’d love to see more happening here and in other historical villages.”
- “ I would love to see more villages.”
- “It was so much fun and I will always think about it when I walk or drive by.”
- “I LOVE the buildings here and their contents. I want to spend more time here.”
- “Taking theater to the historical settings is a wonderful idea- it provides both history and theater.”
- “I didn’t know this place was here before!”

### Question #5

**Where is your home? Where are you from?**

- |                         |                            |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| <u>Minnesota Towns:</u> | <u>Outside of MN:</u>      |
| • Blue Earth 19         | •Minot ND 1                |
| • East Grand Forks 7    | •Grand Forks, ND 33        |
| • Minneapolis 29        | •Thompson, ND 1            |
| • Fairbault 1           | •Larimore, ND 1            |
| • Fairmount 5           | •Evanston, IL 1            |
| • Winnebago 1           | •New York 2                |
| • Badger 1              | •Miami, FL 1               |
| • Warren 1              | •Puerto Rico 1             |
| • Crookston 4           | •Pittsburgh, PA 4          |
| • Greensbush 2          | •Buenos Aires, Argentina 1 |
| • Polk County 1         | •Ventura, IA 1             |
| • Mankato 1             | •Kaawa, HI 2               |
| • Chanhassen 1          | •Cedar Rapids IA, 2        |
| • St.Paul 13            | •Castlewood, SD 1          |
| • Spring Valley, 2      | •Kodiak, AK 1              |
| • Albert Lea, 21        | •Kansas City, MO 1         |
| • North Branch, 1       | •Denver, Co 2              |
| • Austin 6              | •Austin, TX 1              |
| • Luverne 1             |                            |
| • Plymouth 1            |                            |
| • Mankato 2             |                            |
| • Northfield 2          |                            |
| • Vadnais Heights 1     |                            |
| • Wykoff 1              |                            |
| • St. Cloud 1           |                            |
| • Elk River 1           |                            |
| • Kiester 1             |                            |
| • Burnsville 1          |                            |
| • Edina 1               |                            |
| • Sauk Rapids 1         |                            |

## Survey of *The Visit* 2013 Production

**Total Completed Surveys: 187**